

**Listing of the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application. Added text is indicated by underlining, and deleted text is indicated by ~~striking through~~. Changes are identified by a vertical bar in the margin.

1. (currently amended) A pill box comprising:  
a base having a pill cutting surface;  
a lid connected to the base, the lid having a blade; and  
a retractable blade guard ~~secured to the base and~~ engaging the lid such that movement of the lid alone is directly translated into movement of the blade guard.
2. (Original) The pill box of claim 1, wherein the blade guard comprises a flexible strip of material that is substantially impermeable to the blade.
3. (Original) The pill box of claim 2, wherein the blade guard comprises a plastic material.
4. (Original) The pill box of claim 2, wherein the blade guard comprises metallic material.
5. (Original) The pill box of claim 1, wherein the lid and base are connected by a hinge.
6. (currently amended) A pill box comprising:  
a base having a pill cutting surface;  
a lid connected to the base, the lid having a blade; and

a retractable blade guard secured to the base and engaging the lid. ~~The pill box of claim 1,~~ wherein the lid comprises a cam, and wherein the blade guard is threaded over the cam.

7. (Original) The pill box of claim 6, wherein the blade guard is retractable such that it covers the blade when the lid is open and retracts to expose the blade when the lid is closed.

8. (Original) The pill box of claim 1, wherein the base further comprises a pill grip comprising a first holding arm and a second holding arm for adjustably centering a pill on the pill cutting surface into alignment with the blade.

9. (Original) The pill box of claim 8, wherein the first holding arm comprises a first portion that is rigidly coupled to the pill cutting surface and a second region that is flexibly coupled to the first portion, and wherein the second holding arm comprises a first portion that is rigidly coupled to the pill cutting surface and a second portion that is flexibly coupled to the first portion, the first portion of the first holding arm parallel to the first portion of the second holding arm, the second portion of the first holding arm and the second portion of the second holding arm inwardly biased toward one another.

10. (Withdrawn) The pill box of claim 1, wherein a top side of the lid comprises a thumb press portion.

11. (Withdrawn) The pill box of claim 1, wherein a retention lip extends from a distal end of the base for holding the base in position while opening and closing the lid.

12. (Withdrawn) The pill box of claim 1, wherein the lid comprises a proximal end and a distal end, the proximal end being connected to the base, and the distal end

having an opening with a pill container fitted therein, the pill container fitted through the opening and connected by one or more hinges to the lid.

13. (Withdrawn) The pill box of claim 12, wherein the pill container comprises a spherical wedge shape.

14. (Withdrawn) The pill box of claim 1, further comprising a programmable pill counter integrated with the lid.

15. (Withdrawn) The pill box of claim 1, further comprising a programmable pill counter integrated with the base.

16. (Withdrawn) The pill box of claim 1, wherein the base comprises a cavity, and the lid comprises a corresponding protuberance that is sized to fill the cavity when the lid is closed against the base, wherein a pill that is placed in the cavity is crushed when the lid is closed against the base.

17. (currently amended) A pill box comprising:  
a base comprising a bottom side and a top side, the top side having a pill storage compartment, a pill cutting surface, and a pill grip coupled to the pill cutting surface;  
a lid having a top side and a bottom side, the bottom side having a blade coupled thereto, wherein the lid is coupled to the base by one or more hinges;  
a retractable blade guard ~~coupled at one end to the bottom side of the base~~  
configured such that movement of the lid alone relative to the base is directly translated into movement of the blade guard.

18. (Original) The pill box of claim 17, wherein the blade guard comprises a flexible strip of material that is substantially impermeable to the blade.

19. (currently amended) A pill box comprising:

a base comprising a bottom side and a top side, the top side having a pill storage compartment, a pill cutting surface, and a pill grip coupled to the pill cutting surface;

a lid having a top side and a bottom side, the bottom side having a blade coupled thereto, wherein the lid is coupled to the base by one or more hinges;

a retractable blade guard coupled at one end to the bottom side of the base,

The pill box of claim 17,

wherein the lid comprises a cam, and wherein the blade guard is threaded over the cam.

20. (Original) The pill box of claim 17, wherein the blade guard comprises a plastic material.

21. (Original) The pill box of claim 17, wherein the blade guard comprises metallic material.

22. (Original) The pill box of claim 17, wherein the blade guard is retractable such that it covers the blade when the lid is open and retracts to expose the blade when the lid is closed.

23. (Original) The pill box of claim 17, wherein the bottom side of the lid comprises a first wall having a channel formed along its length and a second wall with a channel formed along its length, wherein the first and second walls run parallel with the each other and the blade, and wherein the channels face each other.

24. (Original) The pill box of claim 23, wherein the channels in the first and second walls receive the blade guard.

25. (Original) The pill box of claim 17, wherein the lid comprises one or more finger grips with raised ribs, and wherein the base comprises one or more finger grips with raised ribs.

26. (Original) The pill box of claim 17, wherein the one or more finger grips on the lid are proximal the one or more finger grips on the base when the lid is closed against the base.

27. (Original) The pill box of claim 17, wherein the one or more finger grips on the lid are distal the one or more finger grips on the base when the lid is closed against the base.

28. (Original) The pill box of claim 17, wherein the pill grip comprises a first holding arm and a second holding arm for adjustably centering a pill on the pill cutting surface into alignment with the blade.

29. (Original) The pill box of claim 28, wherein the first holding arm comprises a first portion that is rigidly coupled to the pill cutting surface and a second region that is flexibly coupled to the first portion, and wherein the second holding arm comprises a first portion that is rigidly coupled to the pill cutting surface and a second portion that is flexibly coupled to the first portion, the first portion of the first holding arm parallel to the first portion of the second holding arm, the second portion of the first holding arm and the second portion of the second holding arm inwardly biased toward one another.

30. (Withdrawn) The pill box of claim 17, wherein the top side of the lid comprises a thumb press portion.

31. (Withdrawn) The pill box of claim 17, wherein a retention lip extends from a distal end of the base for holding the base in position while opening and closing the lid.

32. (Withdrawn) The pill box of claim 17, further comprising a programmable pill monitoring timer integrated with the lid.

33. (Withdrawn) The pill box of claim 17, wherein the top side of the base comprises a cavity, and the bottom side of the lid comprises a corresponding protuberance that is sized to fill the cavity when the lid is closed against the base, wherein a pill that is placed in the cavity is crushed when the lid is closed against the base.

34. (Original) A pill box comprising:

a base comprising a bottom side and a top side, the top side having a pill storage compartment, a pill cutting surface, and a pill grip coupled to the pill cutting surface;

a lid having a proximal end with a cam and a bottom side having a blade coupled thereto, wherein the lid is coupled to the base by one or more hinges; and

a blade guard comprising a sheet coupled at one end to the bottom side of the base, wherein the blade guard is threaded over the cam and is retractable such that it covers the blade when the lid is open and retracts to expose the blade to the pill cutting surface when the lid is closed.

35. (Original) The pill box of claim 34, wherein the pill grip comprises a first holding arm and a second holding arm for adjustably centering a pill on the pill cutting surface into alignment with the blade.

36. (Original) The pill box of claim 35, wherein the first holding arm comprises a first portion that is rigidly coupled to the pill cutting surface and a second region that is flexibly coupled to the first portion, and wherein the second holding arm comprises a first

portion that is rigidly coupled to the pill cutting surface and a second portion that is flexibly coupled to the first portion, the first portion of the first holding arm parallel to the first portion of the second holding arm, the second portion of the first holding arm and the second portion of the second holding arm inwardly biased toward one another.

37. (Original) The pill box of claim 34, wherein the bottom side of the lid comprises a first wall having a channel formed along its length and a second wall with a channel formed along its length, wherein the first and second walls run parallel with the each other and the blade, and wherein the channels face each other.

38. (Original) The pill box of claim 37, wherein the channels in the first and second walls receive the blade guard.

39. (Withdrawn) The pill box of claim 34, wherein the lid comprises a programmable pill counter.

40. (Withdrawn) The pill box of claim 34, wherein the base comprises a programmable pill counter.

41. (Withdrawn) The pill box of claim 34, wherein the base comprises a cavity, and the lid comprises a corresponding protuberance that is sized to fill the cavity when the lid is closed against the base, wherein a pill that is placed in the cavity is crushed when the lid is closed against the base.

42. (cancelled)

43. (cancelled)

44. (cancelled)

45. (Withdrawn) The hand-held container of claim 42, wherein a color combination comprising one or more colors indicates that the container comprises a pill crusher.

46. (Withdrawn) The hand-held container of claim 42, wherein a color combination comprising one or more colors indicates that the container comprises a pill counter.

47. (Withdrawn) The hand-held container of claim 42, wherein a color combination comprising one or more colors indicates that the container comprises a pill counter and a pill crusher.

48. (Withdrawn) The hand-held container of claim 42, wherein a color combination comprising one or more colors indicates that the container comprises a pill splitter and a pill counter.

49. (Withdrawn) The hand-held container of claim 42, wherein a color combination comprising one or more colors indicates that the container comprises a pill crusher and a pill monitoring timer.

50. (Withdrawn) The hand-held container of claim 42, wherein a color combination comprising one or more colors indicates that the container comprises a pill splitter, a pill crusher, and a pill counter.

51. (currently amended) A kit comprising:  
one or more pills; and  
a pill box comprising:  
a base having a pill cutting surface and a pill grip;



a lid connected to the base, the lid having a blade; and  
a retractable blade guard ~~secured to the base and~~ engaging the lid  
such that movement of the lid alone is directly translated into movement of the blade guard.

52. (Original) The kit of claim 51 further comprising instructions for use according to a method of splitting the one or more pills, the method comprising:  
placing one of the one or more pills on the pill cutting surface such that it is secured by the pill grip;  
closing the lid against the base such that the retractable blade guard exposes the blade to the pill and the blade slices through the pill; and  
opening the lid to remove the split pill such that the retractable blade guard returns to its original position covering the blade.

53. (Original) The kit of claim 51, wherein the blade guard comprises a flexible strip of material that is substantially impermeable to the blade.

54. (Original) The kit of claim 53, wherein the blade guard comprises a plastic material.

55. (Original) The kit of claim 53, wherein the blade guard comprises metallic material.

56. (Original) The kit of claim 51, wherein the lid and base are connected by a hinge.

57. (currently amended) A kit comprising:  
one or more pills; and  
a pill box comprising:

a base having a pill cutting surface and a pill grip;  
a lid connected to the base, the lid having a blade; and  
a retractable blade guard secured to the base and engaging the lid. ~~The kit~~  
of claim 51,

wherein the lid comprises a cam, and wherein the blade guard is threaded over the cam.

58. (Original) The kit of claim 51, wherein the pill grip comprises a first holding arm and a second holding arm for adjustably centering a pill on the pill cutting surface into alignment with the blade.

59. (Original) The kit of claim 51, wherein the first holding arm comprises a first portion that is rigidly coupled to the pill cutting surface and a second region that is flexibly coupled to the first portion, and wherein the second holding arm comprises a first portion that is rigidly coupled to the pill cutting surface and a second portion that is flexibly coupled to the first portion, the first portion of the first holding arm parallel to the first

60. (Withdrawn) The kit of claim 51, wherein a top side of the lid comprises a thumb press portion.

61. (Withdrawn) The kit of claim 51, wherein a retention lip extends from a distal end of the base for holding the base in position while opening and closing the lid.

62. (Withdrawn) A pill box comprising:  
a base having a pill cutting surface and a pill grip;  
a lid connected to the base, the lid having a blade; and  
a retractable blade guard slideably secured to the lid, the blade guard comprising a raised region that slides over the blade.

63. (Withdrawn) The pill box of claim 62, wherein the raised region of the blade guard forms a channel that is substantially perpendicular to a top of the lid and wherein the blade guard further comprises at least one wing extending laterally from the raised region.

64. (Withdrawn) The pill box of claim 63, wherein the lid comprises at least one track, and wherein an end of the at least one wing is fitted into the track and slides along the track.

65. (Withdrawn) The pill box of claim 63, wherein the base comprises two ramped walls on either side of the pill cutting surface, the two ramped walls substantially parallel to each other and continuing at an upward angle from a distal portion of the base.

66. (Withdrawn) The pill box of claim 65, wherein the lid is connected by hinges to the ramped walls.

67. (Withdrawn) The pill box of claim 65, wherein the at least one wing comprises a raised wingtip at its end, wherein when the lid is closed against the base, at least one of the ramped walls makes contact with the at least one wingtip, thereby forcing the blade guard to slide distally along the at least one ramped wall to expose the blade.

68. (Withdrawn) The pill box of claim 65, further comprising a compression spring inserted between the blade guard and a distal end of the lid, wherein the compression spring forces the blade guard to slide over the blade when the lid is raised.

69. (Withdrawn) The pill box of claim 65, further comprising a compressible gel inserted between the blade guard and a distal end of the lid, wherein the gel forces the blade guard to slide over the blade when the lid is raised.

70. (Withdrawn) The pill box of claim 62, wherein the lid comprises a programmable pill counter.

71. (Withdrawn) The pill box of claim 62, wherein the base comprises a programmable pill counter.

72. (Withdrawn) The pill box of claim 62, wherein the base comprises a cavity, and the lid comprises a corresponding protuberance that is sized to fill the cavity when the lid is closed against the base, wherein a pill that is placed in the cavity is crushed when the lid is closed against the base.

73. (currently amended) A pill box comprising:  
a base having a cutting surface;  
a lid having a cutting device; and  
a retractable guard operable to move in direct response to movement of the lid alone so as to cover the cutting device when the lid is moved away from the base and to retract and expose the cutting device when the lid is moved toward the base.

74. (Previously presented) The pill box of claim 73, wherein the base and the lid are coupled.

75. (Previously presented) The pill box of claim 73, wherein the cutting device is a blade.

76. (Previously presented) The pill box of claim 73, wherein the lid includes channels.

77. (currently amended) The pill box of claim ~~75~~ 76, wherein the channels guide the retractable guard.

78. (Previously presented) The pill box of claim 73, wherein the retractable guard moves linearly.

79. (currently amended) A pill box comprising:  
a cutting surface;  
a movable lid over the cutting surface;  
a cutting device; and  
a guard adapted to move in direct response to movement of the lid alone  
so as to cover the cutting device when the cutting surface is moved away from the cutting surface  
and to expose the cutting device when the cutting device is moved near the cutting surface.

80. (currently amended) The pill box of claim ~~78~~ 79, wherein the cutting device is a blade.

81. (currently amended) The pill box of claim ~~78~~ 79, wherein the cutting surface is included in a base of the pill box and the cutting device is included in a lid of the pill box.

82. (currently amended) The pill box of claim ~~80~~ 81, wherein the lid includes channels that guide the guard.

83. (currently amended) The pill box of claim ~~78~~ 79, wherein the guard moves linearly.